AKha A04
Miao AE5

M 883 /73 cont./ consider which partner they could marry, and, in short, no longer live only in the present. They are entirely satisfied with the way of life prescribed by the sib laws. There are M [578] never any disputes between the generations. On the contrary, the young people treat the older ones with veneration and respect, and it never occurs to them to criticize existing institutions.

M 869 Similarly, their attitude toward religious matters does not change. Since early childhood these matters have played 755 a major role in their lives (see the chapter, "Religion and 771 Magic," the section on "Cult and Taboo"). They have re- [883] peatedly seen the shaman drive away evil spirits and believe that in doing so he has freed other children, and perhaps themselves, of these spirits and therefore of sicknesses (see the chapter, "Medicine"). Moreover, they have heard that in case of the death of a child, the shaman was weaker than the evil spirits. They do not doubt for a moment the existence of such spirits, whose activity and effect have been so strikingly and obviously demonstrated, for the death of a child always makes a lasting impression upon his playmates.

A 881 /74/ Things are somewhat different among the Akha. Probably as a result of premature sexual intercourse (see the [886] section, "Sexual Development," in this chapter), the actual beginning of puberty brings with it only slight psychological changes.

A 881 883 The pubescent Akha give no thought to the past or the future. They do not criticize, but rather are completely satisfied with the way the adults regulate life. Similarly there is no criticism among them concerning the traditions and even less about religious matters, which in general do not play A [776] nearly as decisive a role as among the Meau. An exaggerated [781] fear of the spirits is as unknown to the adolescents as to the adults. There is no period of passivity or of intense activity, no withdrawal or shame on the part of girls menstruating for the first time. The pubescent Akha for the most part have long been informed, and they therefore expect the advent of puberty with all the accompanying circumstances. There is no daydreaming or introspection among them. With the increase

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/79 cont./

A M 868 The small child is first taught how to speak, beginning with the words for father and mother. Later comes the simple housework, and only then the aforementioned more difficult spheres of work. For the latter the parents on the one hand select those children who exhibit special talents for the one or the other sphere; on the other hand, the educators and parents naturally seek to train the children in those crafts which they themselves as teachers and models have mastered extraordinarily well. One Meau father, for instance, who was an excellent hunter, said to me: "I would have liked to make a hunter out of my oldest boy, but he is only interested in my smithy.

A M 1867 869 Besides these things which are required to master the material aspects of life, the educators and parents also instruct the children in religion and medicine, since this is not the business of the shaman, as well as manners and good behavior, which is very important in view of the traditional politeness of the Meau! In short, education includes everything that will enable the child to master life later on and to become a respected member of the community. For the rest, all the wishes of the children are complied with as far as possible. To be M [868] sure, among the Meau they are not trained to dance, but they are not prevented from dancing.

A M 861 From earliest childhood punishment and reward are used as a means of education. Disobedient children are reprimanded, and if this does not help, they get a beating, along with references to their duties, up to the age of eight, as parents explained to me. Actually I never saw adults actually beat a child. As a reward, on the other hand, a father may carve a small crossbow for his eight-year-old son, or, among the Meau, ask the blacksmith to make a small gun for his well-behaved son.

A M 593 858 The children are brought up remarkably well. They obey promptly, and one rarely sees it happen that a child has to be punished. The children are treated equitably, but there are always special favorites. As a rule, it is the ailing or weak upon whom /80/ the affection of the parents is obviously bestowed, or upon the youngest, who naturally are also the weakest. The older children do not mind this, and siblings are generally not jealous at all as soon as they have